



# Lower Brandy Creek Trail



Brandy Creek is one of the most pristine streams in Northern California. Wintu Indians fished this creek for many centuries. The large oaks shading the lower portion of the trail have existed there for hundreds of years.

## TRAILHEAD DIRECTIONS

Starting at the Whiskeytown Visitor Center, drive south on Kennedy Memorial Drive towards Whiskeytown Dam. The road forks. Continue on the right fork, crossing over the dam. The paved road winds around the lake to the Brandy Creek Beach area. Turn left on Shasta Bally Road. Immediately to the right and next to the creek is the parking area. The trailhead is here, next to the bulletin board.

## TRAIL DESCRIPTION

This pleasant trail leads up Brandy Creek as it comes tumbling down from the snow covered slopes of Shasta Bally. The white granite boulders, many covered in a thick green moss, thundered down the drainage in a series of fast moving debris flows.

The trail is an old logging road that parallels the creek and eventually takes the visitor from

## FEATURES

Difficulty Level: Moderate

Length: 1.62 miles one way

Elevation: 1,250 to 1,650 feet

Scenic waterfall

Four stream crossings during winter and early spring

This trail connects to the Upper Brandy Creek Falls Trail

Whiskeytown Lake to Brandy Creek Falls. It follows the steep east bank of the creek with spectacular views of Brandy Creek rushing over the boulder strewn channel.

Be aware that the trail shares Shasta Bally Road for several short distances. Look for the signs that will lead you back to the hiking trail.

Distant views of Shasta Bally can be seen along the route. The path is shaded by large oaks and rises into a mixed conifer forest in the higher elevations.

There are four small stream crossings during the winter season. Hikers can hop across, rock to rock, rather easily.

The trail continues uphill, winding through the forest towards Sheep Camp. Near Sheep Camp, the trail runs into the road. The road forks, to reach Sheep Camp about one quarter mile distant, take the right fork, crossing over the bridge. The forest around Sheep Camp is made up of old growth Douglas fir and ponderosa pines, some dating back to the 1700s.

To continue to the falls from Sheep Camp, cross back over the bridge. Immediately to right, the trail continues, crossing over a small stream. From here, the path parallels the

creek's left bank to the Upper Brandy Creek Falls trailhead, approximately one mile upstream.

During the summer, Brandy Creek has many shallow pools of cool, clear water suitable for swimming. Indian rhubarb, with leaves over 12 inches in diameter, can be found growing along the stream.

The American dipper or water ouzel; a small chunky slate-colored bird, can be seen flying low over pools, diving into the cascades in search of aquatic insects. The dipper often nests behind waterfalls for protection from predators. The bird's hooked nails on its toes help it hold on to the slippery rocks in the fast moving current.

## SAFETY

Stay back from cliff edges, they are eroding and can crumble from beneath.

Slippery and wet rocks can make rock hopping dangerous.

Use caution near swift moving water and do not attempt to cross Brandy Creek in the winter or spring time.







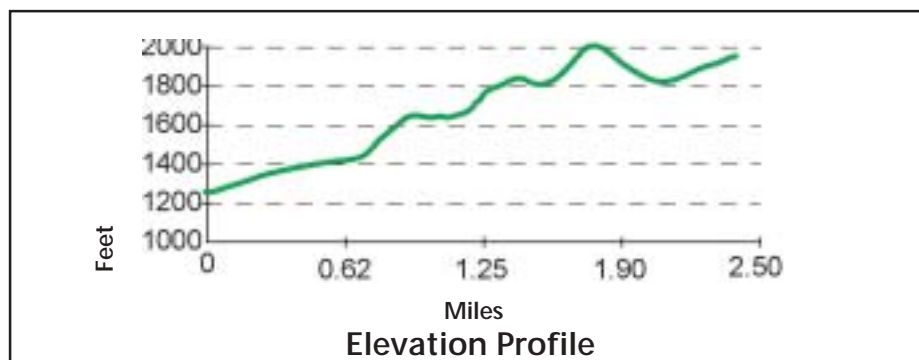
American dipper, or water ouzel



Indian rhubarb



Showy phlox



Elevation Profile



Hartweg's iris